

FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC...

1. ***I have a problem with my dentist. How do I lodge a complaint?***

Our office, the State Board of Dental Examiners, is charged with the authority of taking action against a dentist's/dental hygienist's license when he/she is found to be in violation of state law. Our authority does not extend to mediation or resolution of fee disputes. If you feel that a violation may have occurred, you may file a written narrative of the incident with the Board. A second option is to file a complaint with either the Northern Nevada Dental Society, Reno (775-337-0296) or the Southern Nevada Dental Society, Las Vegas (702-733-8700) for action by the local Peer Review Committee.

2. ***I am considering going to a new dentist. How can I find out more about his background?*** Although the Board does not make recommendations or referrals, you can inquire about a dentist you are considering. The Board office provides information on license status, dental school attended, and whether or not action has been taken against his/her license. You may obtain this information by telephone (800-337-3926) or online through our website under the 'License Verification' section.

3. ***My dentist's office has refused to give me a copy of my records. Is this legal?*** No. Nevada law requires that health care practitioners provide a copy of patient records at the request of the patient or the patient's representative. A nominal fee may be charged for copies; however, a dentist may not withhold records due to an outstanding balance. You may contact the Board office if you need assistance in obtaining your records.

4. ***My new dentist insists on taking x-rays and doing a complete oral examination, and all I really want is to get my teeth cleaned. Is this legal?*** A licensed dentist in this state is required to complete an oral examination prior to beginning treatment (including teeth cleaning) on a new patient. The majority of dental offices in this state do require x-rays be taken along with the exam prior to beginning treatment on a new patient. This type of policy ensures that a thorough diagnosis is obtained. You have the right, of course, to seek treatment elsewhere if you disagree with office policy regarding x-rays. However, the dentist has a professional obligation to provide treatment that he/she feels is in the best interests of the patient. If the patient doesn't cooperate, the dentist is under no obligation to proceed with treatment. See Nevada Administrative Code [\(NAC\) 631.210](#).